

Chapter 1.0 INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

This Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) contains the public and agency comments received during the public review period for the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan and Study Areas Project Draft Environmental Impact Report.

The EIR is an informational document intended to disclose to the City of Auburn and the public the environmental consequences of approving and implementing the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan and Study Areas project. All written comments received during the public review period (June 8, 2010 through July 23, 2010) for the Draft EIR are addressed in this Final EIR, including oral comments received at the July 13, 2010, Planning Commission hearing on the Draft EIR.

The responses in the Final EIR clarify, correct, and amplify text in the Draft EIR, as appropriate. Also included are text changes made at the initiative of the Lead Agency (City of Auburn). These changes (summarized in Chapter 2) do not alter the conclusions of the Draft EIR. This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Public Resources Code (PRC) sections 21000-21177).

BACKGROUND

In accordance with CEQA, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) was released on December 27, 2007. The purpose of the NOP was to provide notification that an EIR for the project was being prepared and to solicit guidance on the scope and content of the document. A public scoping meeting was held in January 2008 to receive input on the scope of the EIR. In January 2009, the project applicant revised the land use plan and a revised NOP was prepared and publically distributed from April 9, 2009, through May 11, 2009. An Addendum to the April 2009 NOP was publicly circulated from March 19 to April 9, 2010. The Addendum described a change to the proposed circulation plan. Responses to the NOPs were received from agencies, organizations, and individuals. The 2007 NOP, 2009 NOP and 2010 Addendum are included in Appendices A through C of the Draft EIR.

The Draft EIR was circulated for public review and comment for a period of 45 days from June 8, 2010 through July 23, 2010. A public hearing before the City's Planning Commission was held on the Draft EIR on July 13, 2010.

The comments and responses that make up the Final EIR, in combination with the Draft EIR, as amended by the text changes, constitute the EIR that will be considered for certification by the City of Auburn.

PROJECT UNDER REVIEW

The approximately 406-acre Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan (BRSP) and Study Areas Project (proposed project) is located in the southwestern portion of the City of Auburn, approximately two

miles from downtown Auburn along Interstate 80 (I-80). The project site is generally bounded by the westbound Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) rail line to the south, Auburn-Folsom Road to the east, the City/County boundary to the west, and I-80 to the north and northwest. The project includes a specific plan for a 277-acre portion of the project site to be developed with a mix of low-, medium- and high-density residential uses as well as retail and commercial uses. The project includes redesignating and rezoning the remaining 129-acre portion of the project site (Study Areas) for low density residential development.

The BRSP is proposed to be developed in two phases with development of Plan Area 1 anticipated to occur prior to Future Plan Area 2. Plan Area 1 totals 130 acres and would include 270 residential units, while Future Plan Area 2 encompasses 147 acres and would include 203 residential units. In Future Plan Area 2, 28 acres are designated for Mixed Use, which could include up to 252 residential units and up to 90,000 square feet (sf) of commercial uses.

A detailed project description is provided in Chapter 3, Project Description of the Draft EIR. The environmental impact analyses are in each of the technical sections in Chapter 5 of the Draft EIR.

SUMMARY OF TEXT CHANGES

The Changes to the Draft EIR, Chapter 2 in this Final EIR, identify all changes made to the document by subject matter section. These text changes provide additional clarity and do not change the significance conclusions presented in the Draft EIR.

RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

A list of agencies, organizations, and individuals commenting on the Draft EIR is included in Chapter 3 in this Final EIR. Responses to comments appear in Chapter 4 of this Final EIR. Each comment letter is presented with brackets indicating how the letter has been divided into individual comments. Each comment is given a binomial with the number of the comment letter appearing first, followed by the comment number. For example, comments in Letter 1 are numbered 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, and so on. Immediately following the letter are responses, each with binomials that correspond to the bracketed comments. As the subject matter of one topic may overlap between letters, the reader must occasionally refer to one or more responses to review all the information on a given subject. To assist the reader, cross references are provided.

MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM

The Mitigation Monitoring Program (MMP) for the Proposed Project, presented in Chapter 5, includes all of the mitigation measures required of the Proposed Project by the Draft EIR, as revised in Chapter 2 of this Final EIR.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND REVIEW

The City of Auburn notified all responsible and trustee agencies and interested groups, organizations, and individuals that the Draft EIR on the proposed project was available for review. The following list of actions took place during the preparation, distribution, and review of the Draft EIR:

- City of Auburn filed a Notice of Preparation(s) (NOP) for an EIR with the State Clearinghouse for the required a 30-day public review period. The first NOP was released on December 27, 2007. A revised NOP was prepared and publically distributed from April 9, 2009, through May 11, 2009. An Addendum to the April 2009 NOP was publicly circulated from March 19 to April 9, 2010.
- A public scoping meeting was held on January 24, 2008.
- A Notice of Completion (NOC) and copies of the Draft EIR were filed with the State Clearinghouse on June 8, 2010. A 45-day public review period for the Draft EIR was established by the State Clearinghouse, ending on July 23, 2010, and a Notice of Availability (NOA) was distributed to interested groups, organizations, and Individuals. A public hearing to take comments on the Draft EIR was held on July 13, 2010.
- Copies of the Draft EIR were available for review at the City of Auburn Planning Department, 1225 Lincoln Way, Room 3, Auburn, CA 95603; Auburn library, 350 Nevada Street, Auburn, CA 95603, and on the City's website.